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Agenda item 5
Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory

Security Council
Sixty-ninth year

Identical letters dated 8 July 2014 from the Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Security Council

The situation on the ground in Occupied Palestine is deteriorating at an alarming rate owing to the escalation of Israel's latest campaign of military aggression, which began on 12 June 2014, against the Palestinian people. In particular, the occupying Power has intensified its onslaught against the besieged Gaza Strip, in grave breach of international law, including international humanitarian law and the relevant provisions regarding the protection of civilians in armed conflict, and in grave breach of the prohibition of reprisals and collective punishment against the civilian population under occupation.

Palestinian civilian casualties are tragically mounting as a result of this brutal and criminal Israeli onslaught. Since my letter to you yesterday, the occupying Power has launched more than 150 military airstrikes deliberately targeting civilian areas in the Gaza Strip, killing at least 22 Palestinians and injuring more than 100 civilians, including women, children and the elderly. The intensification of Israel's aggression against the 1.7 million Palestinians imprisoned in the Gaza Strip by Israel's immoral blockade threatens to further destabilize the dangerous situation on the ground and fully ignite yet another round of deadly violence.

Today, 8 July 2014, Israeli jets and naval gunfire struck at several civilian areas in Gaza, bringing life to a standstill and deepening fear and panic among the already-traumatized Palestinian civilian population. The destructive, lethal attacks by the occupying Power have been widespread, targeting many homes and civilian infrastructure in areas all over Gaza. Among the dead in the past 24 hours were six children, two of them under five years of age, in addition to a 13-year-old child and a 14-year-old child. Also among those killed were: Mohammed Habib and his 19-year-old son, Mousa, who were killed after an airstrike hit a vehicle in the Al-Shujaiyeh neighbourhood, in Gaza City, and Fakri Saleh Ajjouri, who was killed after an airstrike on his motorcycle near Abraj Al-Sheikh Zayed, in the northern

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Gaza Strip. Abduallah Kaware, Mohammad Ashour (age 13), Riyad Kaware, Mahmoud Judeh, Bakir Mahmoud Judeh (age 22), Amaar Mohammad Judeh (age 22) and Hussein Mohammad Kaware (age 14) were also all brutally murdered when an Israeli rocket obliterated their home.

Further escalation of this inhumane military aggression by the occupying Power against the Gaza Strip will only ensure the loss of more innocent civilian lives among the occupied and defenceless Palestinian population. Statements by Israeli officials, including the Prime Minister of Israel, who stated that the military operation against Gaza would be expanded, including a possible ground invasion into Gaza, reveal the true intention of the occupying Power to intensify the military aggression and plunge the area into another deadly and destructive cycle of violence. In this regard, I must draw attention to the fact that Israeli occupying forces, including tanks, trucks, armoured vehicles, bulldozers and buses, are amassing near the Gaza border, and 40,000 so-called Israeli reservists have been mobilized. Clearly, the situation before us demands the attention of the international community, particularly the Security Council, which is duty-bound to act to maintain international peace and security and, in accordance with international humanitarian law, ensure protection for the Palestinian people under this savage military occupation.

We thus reiterate our urgent appeal to the Security Council to uphold its duties under the Charter of the United Nations and undertake the necessary action to bring an end to this Israeli aggression and to protect the Palestinian civilian population. What is being perpetrated by Israel against the Palestinian people constitutes a grave breach of all norms of international law, including the Fourth Geneva Convention, which prohibits the wilful killing of civilians and reprisals against the civilian population by the occupying Power. War crimes are clearly being perpetrated by Israel against the Palestinian people and this must be unequivocally condemned and stopped. A strong message must be sent to Israel, the occupying Power, to cease immediately its military campaign and abide by the law, in order to de-escalate this dangerous situation, to promote calm, and, most importantly, to save innocent civilian lives.

This letter is in follow-up to our 503 letters regarding the ongoing crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, which constitutes the territory of the State of Palestine. These letters, dated from 29 September 2000 (A/55/432-S/2000/921) to 7 July 2014 (A/ES-10/636-S/2014/473), constitute a basic record of the crimes being committed by Israel, the occupying Power, against the Palestinian people since September 2000. For all of these war crimes, acts of State terrorism and systematic human rights violations being committed against the Palestinian people, Israel, the occupying Power, must be held accountable and the perpetrators must be brought to justice.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of the present letter distributed as a document of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 5, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Riyad **Mansour**
Ambassador
Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations